

Palm Sunday in Holy Week - April 13, 2025
Homily by Bp. Romie- Jun Peñalosa

Today is a unique Sunday. Hindi ito pang karaniwan na linggo. Today, if you notice, maraming tao sa simbahan. Wherever you will go today, pupunta ka sa lahat ng simbahan, puno ang simbahan ngayong linggo na ito. And the second thing about this day is, minsan puno naman talaga ang simbahan, maraming tao. Pero this is the Sunday na yung mga taong pumupunta sa church, may dalang palaspas. Hindi naman tayo linggo-linggo may dalang palm branches. This is only one time of the year that we come to church together at may daladala tayong mga palaspas. And the third thing, why this Sunday is so special and unique, this is the only Sunday that we read two gospels. Dalawang ibanghelyo natin na binasa. The first gospel we read it outside, sa labas natin binasa. It was the gospel, the narrative of Jesus entering Jerusalem during His final days. It was His entry in Jerusalem where everybody was shouting, Hosanna! Hosanna! And He is welcomed by the people. Then the gospel, the second gospel na binasa natin, is the gospel of Christ's suffering. The gospel account of Jesus in His passion, in His sufferings. Yun ang pangalawang gospel natin. Kaya yung unang kanta natin pagpasok sa church, masaya. Okay? And the second entrance, when the ministers enter, medyo hindi na masaya-masyado. Medyo confrontational yung kanta na sinanta natin. But before we go to the gospel, let us look at the Old Testament reading first. The Old Testament reading foretells the suffering of Christ. Isaiah speaks of the suffering servant. And here, our first reading teaches us that we need to grow in our trust in the Lord. If we are serving God, if we are following God in our life, we need to grow in our trust in Him. And how do we grow? How do we grow? Papano tayo lalago in our trust in God? It's not in beautiful times. It is not during comfortable times. It is not during happy times that we grow in our trust in God. We grow in our trust in God when we go through the difficulties of life. When we go through the trials and the testings, when we go through the sufferings, that is always an opportunity for us to grow in our trust in God. Minsan, ayaw natin yung mga tests and trials. Minsan, we pray so hard that the Lord will remove all the discomfort, all the problems hinihingi natin sa Diyos. Kunin lahat ng problema natin sa buhay. Pero may mga problema talagang hindi kinukuha ng Diyos because those things are necessary for us to grow in our trust in Him. Amen? We need to understand that. The Christian life is not about running away from discomfort, running away from trials and tribulations, running away from responsibility. The Christian life is about trusting in God always. In difficult times, we need to put our trust and confidence in God. It's so easy to trust God as provider when you have so much money in the bank.

Pag marami kang pera, malakas pang katawan mo, malusugat, nagtatrabaho ka, sumasahod ka, it's so easy to say that God is my provider kasi ang dami mong pera eh. You know?

It will not take effort to trust God, to trust for His provisions when you have so much in your life. But then the Lord brings us to certain seasons in our lives where nauubos yung provisions.

And it is during at this time na wala nang provision, walang pera sa bangko, walang pagkain sa bahay, that we need to trust God more in our life.

This is the time that we have to remain in Christ, seeing Him as the God who richly provides.

Ayaw natin yan.

Ayaw natin talaga yan.

Gusto natin palaging busog ang tiyan.

May laman ang bulsa palagi.

Okay?

That's how we want to trust God.

Basta meron ako.

But the days are coming that God will remove that.

Amen?

So we will grow in our trust in Him.

We see this in the first reading.

The second reading speaks of Jesus as the servant of God who empties Himself.

Life is a constant emptying of your life.

Sinasabi ko palagi yan sa mga pare.

Sabi ko sa mga pare,

ang buhay natin bilang pare, it's not about hoarding things.

Habang palapit ka na sa oras, when you come nearer to the hour of death, you don't accumulate wealth.

You give them away.

Sabi ko na nga, pag naghihingalo ka na, when you're coming to your last breath, you should not cling to anything in this world.

Dapat na paibigay mo na lahat yan.

Walang kukunin sa'yo kung yung mga bagay ay pinagbigay mo na.

Walang babawiin sa'yo if you have already given up everything.

That's why our second reading speaks of Jesus who left everything,

the glory of being the Son of God,

He left that and came down and took upon Himself our human nature.

He emptied Himself by becoming a slave,

He became a servant, a human being like us.

Then akala mo tapos na? No.

When He went to Calvary,

He emptied Himself more on the cross where on the cross nothing was left to Him, not even His own blood.

Everything was drained out of Him.

Pati yung saplot na nagtatakip sa Kanya, wala na yun.

Wala na siyang lakas.

Wala na.

Binigay niya lahat.

That is the picture of what Christian life is about.

The Christian life is about emptying yourself every day.

Why do we do that?

Because the less of us, the more of God.

Amen?

The less I have,
the more Christ will become evident in my life.
Sabi nga na St. John the Baptist when he saw Jesus,
sabi niya, wow, behold the Lamb of God.
Here is now our Savior.
He must increase and I must decrease.
Amen?

But many of us in our life,
we are not willing to decrease
and because we are not willing to empty ourselves,
we cannot have Christ more and more in our life.
Less of me means more of Jesus in me.
Now we go to the Gospel today.
Our Gospel starts with the triumphal entry of Christ to Jerusalem.
When the people heard of this famous teacher coming to town,
this miracle worker,
this good man, he's coming to town already,
everybody welcomed him.
Yun ang reading natin sa labas.
They raise up palm branches
that signifies a triumphal king.
When a king returns from battle,
at yung hari na yan nanalo siya sa gyera,
people will take branches and wave it at their king.
So the palm branches is symbolic of a victorious king coming to us.
Then some of them remove their cloaks,
their outer garments and put it on the road.
Para yun ang dadaanan ng hari.
In other words, there was so much honor,
so much respect that they gave to Christ upon his entry.
He was surrounded by love,
people who, you know, love him.
This Palm Sunday, I would like us to focus on two things only.
First, the first gospel is about friendship.
It's about friendship.
The second gospel that we read,
it's about enemies.
The first gospel is about friends,
the second gospel is about enemies.
Now let's talk about friends.
Holy Week, at this time,
this is the time that you evaluate your life.
Kasi mahilig tayo ina-evaluate natin yung buhay ng iba.
Mahilig tayo tumingin sa kasalanan ng ibang tao,
hindi natin tinitingnan yung kasalanan natin.
Kaya yung taong ginadjudge natin,
minsan nagbabago, pero tayo hindi talaga nagbabago.
Why?
Because we look at others and judge them
and we never bother to look at ourselves.
Palagi na lang kasalanan ng iba.
We never take responsibility for ourselves.
One of the things that brings so much stress in the life of people
is relationships.
Isa yan sa nagbibigay talaga ng stress sa buhay natin.
Pabigat ng buhay,
hindi maayos ang relasyon.
The number one killer of people today is stress.
Maraming sakit ngayon ang tinatawag ng doktor.
Stress related.
And we bring that stress upon ourselves
because we don't fix our relationships.
Hindi natin inaayos yung mga relasyon natin.
Iniiwasan natin.

Bakit? Mahirap kasi ayusin ang relasyon.
And we think that if we will not fix it,
we will not be intentional,
hindi natin sagyain yan,
and we will not put effort to it,
we think that our relationship will just take care of itself by itself.
No, it will not.
Ginahongod aron.
Pero pag-ayos ito, relasyon ay ginahongod ron.
At kung ginahongod mo ron, hay may imo gitang effort don.
You have to put effort to it.
To fix your relationship.
Because if we cannot fix relationships,
then we will be stressed out.
We will die ahead of our time
because hindi natin inaayos yung relasyon natin sa buhay.
This past few Sundays of Lent,
I have been reflecting in my own life
as far as my relationship with God is concerned.
And I hope na itong limang linggo ng Lent,
na evaluate nyo rin yung mga puso nyo.
You have also evaluated your relationship with God.
Now let's talk about our relationship with one another.
Ang unang relasyon naayosin natin,
yung relasyon muna sa Diyos.
Pag hindi mo inayos yung relasyon mo sa Diyos,
lahat ng relasyon dito sa mundo,
hindi yan maaayos.
You'll never be able to get your relationships here on Earth
in order if you cannot fix that relationship with God.
So you do it first.
Ayusin mo muna yung relasyon mo sa Diyos.
Now let's talk about friendship.
This Holy Week, I would like us to evaluate our friendship.
Community, magkakaibigan tayo.
Ano bang basihan ng pagkakaibigan natin?
What is the foundation of our friendships?
Is it because we share a common interest?
Pareho tayong mahilig sa sports?
You know, that could be good sometimes.
Pareho tayong mahilig sa sports so naging kaibigan tayo
because we share the same passion for basketball or tennis.
Pero mga kapatid, mababaw yan.
Mababaw lang yan.
Sometimes our relationship is based on our hobbies.
Ano bang hilig natin?
Pagkain.
Mahilig sa Japanese food.
Mahilig sa Thai na pagkain.
Mahilig sa Korean food.
So you share the same passion for food.
Therefore, you became friends.
Nagkikita kayo sa restaurant palagi.
O sige, mag-Korean tayo.
Mag-Samgyupsal tayo.
And you become friends.
We have foundations based on our hobbies and likes and dislikes.
Meron nga mga tao, naging kakaibigan sila
because they have a common enemy.
Pareho silang kaaway.
Naging friends na lang sila.
Kaya pag namatay yung kaaway nila, sila na naman mag-aaway.
Wala na, patay na yung linilibak nila.
Patay na eh.

See?

Evaluate your friendship
because if we do not evaluate our relationship with friends,
friendship can put a strain in your life.

It could stress you out.

That's why ayusin natin.

There are people who don't want to make friends anymore.

Sinasabi nila yan, pag tumatanda na daw yung tao,
namimili ka na kung sino lang kaibigan mo.

Mag-uumpisa ka pag teenager ka, lahat ng tao, kaibigan mo.

Di ba?

When you go into twenties, thirties ka,
namimili ka ng tao na, you know, kasama mo lang sa trabaho,
kasama mo sa gimmick.

Those are your friends.

Pero sabi nila, pag dumating ka na dun sa 60, 70, 80,
yung kaibigan mo, yung nakakatiis na lang sa'yo.

So dalawa na lang o tatlo.

Okay?

The Lord is reminding us, continue to make friends.

Amen.

And establish your friendship in Jesus.

Magkaibigan tayo dahil pareho tayong nagmamahal kay Kristo.

You cannot choose your family.

Amen.

Walang namimili ng pamilya niya.

But you can choose your friends.

That's the beauty of it.

That's why make friends.

And establish your friendship in Christ.

Share Jesus with your friends.

Pakalakasin nyo ang relasyon nyo sa mga kaibigan nyo.

Dalhin nyo si Kristo sa relasyon ninyo.

That we come together as friends.

Nagiging kaibigan tayo.

Hindi lang sa basketball.

Hindi lang dun sa negosyo na pinag-uusapan natin.

But we are really friends because you love Jesus.

I love Jesus also.

We are both in love with the same person.

And that brings us together.

And no matter what the test and the tribulation may come in your friendship,
you will remain friends because of Jesus.

Now, evaluate this Holy Week.

Papasok tayo sa Semana Santa.

We have a few days to evaluate our friendship.

Ano ba yung mga kaibigan ko?

Evaluate your friendship with friends.

No, no. You make friends.

I'll give you a tip.

If you make friends with one person, one person a week.

Isang tao lang sa isang linggo.

Introduce yourself.

Introduce Jesus to this person.

In one week, make one friend.

In one month, you will have four friends already in one month.

Four friends that you bring to Christ and establish a relationship with in
Christ.

Now, in three months' time, tatlong gwan, how many friends would you have?
Three months' time.

You will have twelve friends.

In three months' time, you will have twelve friends who can become twelve
disciples of Christ already.

Amen?

Papano naman yung mga dating kaibigan natin, our old friends?

Well, find out if they have Jesus with them also.

Bring Christ into your relationship with your friends.

Amen?

So, you contemplate on that.

Make a commitment starting this Holy Week, I will make friends with one person every week.

Now, let's talk about enemies.

Yung mga kaaway naman.

Make friends and prepare for enemies.

Pinaghahandaan din yung kaaway.

Okay?

Ba't kayo nakasmile?

Ibang paghahandaang iniisip nyo.

Prepare what did Jesus say about enemies?

Love them.

Love them.

Kaya nga hindi tayo, hindi natin kaya to love our enemies kasi hindi natin pinaghahandaan.

Ibang pinaghahandaan natin.

Anong pinaghahandaan natin?

Makaganti tayo sa ginawa sa atin.

Yun ang pinaplano natin.

And the Lord is saying, no, don't do that.

Because that will create more and more enemies in your life.

Sabi niya, love them.

Love your enemies.

What else?

What else do we prepare for enemies?

Prepare to bless them.

Bless those who spitefully use you.

Bless those who irritate you.

Bless those who take advantage of you.

Bless and do not curse them.

Oh Bishop, napakahirap naman yan.

Kaya nga, sinasabi ko na sa inyo eh.

Hindi madali ang maging Kristiyano.

Sino bang nagloko sa inyo?

Na sinabi sa inyo, maging Kristiyano ka, Brad, madali lang yan.

Kalukuhan yan.

To choose to be a follower of Christ is difficult.

Amen?

Kaya kukonti na lang ngayon ang sumusunod kay Kristo.

Kumukonti, nang kumukonti na lang.

Because it's difficult.

Alone, by yourself, you cannot do it.

You have to follow and stick with Jesus.

Hindi basta-basta ang mahal in mo yung kaaway mo.

Kung hindi mo mahal si Kristo, mahihirapan kang mahal in yung kaaway mo.

Pero pag natutunan mong mahal in si Kristo sa buhay mo,

then it will not be a struggle to love your enemy.

I may not like my enemy.

Hindi naman utos ng Diyos sa akin,

like your enemies.

There are enemies of mine I really don't like.

But I love them.

Pag dumaan sila sa bahay ko,

makakasigurado silang walang bato nang lilipad galing sa gate ko.

Wala.

I don't like them.

But I'm not going to hurt them.

I'm not going to do to them what I don't want people to do to me.

Do you understand what I'm saying?

You have to love your enemies.

You have to bless them, not curse them.
It's difficult to do that.
Father John, Bishop,
wala naman akong kaaway.
Totoo?
Wala ka bang kaaway?
Ang taong walang kaaway, walang panindigan.
Because if you stand for Jesus, if you stand for something,
you will always have enemies.
One time, may nag-text sa akin.
Minura ako sa text.
Talagang minura niya ako sa text.
So binasa ko lang yung text.
Hanggang mata lang, hindi ko pinapapasok sa puso ko yung pagmumura sa akin.
And he got so angry kasi nagsabi daw ako,
mag-ingat kayo sa mga magnanakaw.
I said that in church. Sabi ko, maraming magnanakaw, mag-ingat kayo.
Ang text niya sa akin, na pinulpito ko daw siya.
Pinaringan ko daw siya sa pulpito.
Sabi ko nung tinuro ko at sinabi ko yan, hindi nga kita naiisip eh.
You see, when you stand for Jesus at sasabihin mong,
kayong magnanakaw, huwag mo nang gawin yan.
Yung mga palihim na nagnanakaw, masasaktan yun.
Masasaktan talaga.
When you start to stand for righteousness,
those who live against righteousness will be hurt
and they will become your enemy already.
Magiging kaaway mo na yan.
One time I was also talking,
sinabi ko rin sa simbahan,
I'm not pointing, wala akong tinuturong tao.
Sabi ko, tigilan niyo na yung pangbababain niyo.
Because I know of men who nang bababay pa rin.
Napakaganda ng pamilya nila.
Napakaganda ng asawa.
They have wonderful children.
But the man goes out and sleep with other women.
And so, sabi ko lang sa simbahan,
kayong mga lalaki, tama na yan pangbababae.
Mahalin yung pamilya niyo.
Love your wife.
How do you love the children?
How do you love your children?
By loving their mother.
Amen?
Sa mga lalaki,
kung mahal mo yung nanay ng mga anak mo,
nako, yan ang unang ebidensya na mahal mo yung mga anak mo.
By loving their mother.
So I mentioned that to the men.
Sabi ko, tigilan niyo na yung pangbababae na yan.
Concentrate and focus your family.
Again, may pumunta na naman sa akin.
Sabi sa akin, kung hindi ka lang pare, nasapak na kita.
Sasapakin niya ako dahil sinabi ko, tigilan na yung pangbababae.
So tinanong ko lang siya.
Sabi ko, bakit, nangbababae ka ba?
Sabi niya, hindi naman.
Sasapakin niya ako dahil sinabi ko, tigilan yung pangbababae.
Did I point him out? I did not.
You see, when you stand for righteousness,
you stand for good,
there are those who will really get hurt.
And they will attack.

They will retaliate against you.
Ganoon nangyari kay Jesus eh.
Jesus was not pointing out the sins of every individual.
He was telling everyone, repent from sin.
Sin will destroy your life.
Sin will kill you.
Now return to the Lord who loves you.
Yun lang naman sinabi niya.
Tingnan mo nangyari sa kanya.
Pinako siya sa cross.
Nagkaroon siya ng kaaway.
Na kung ayaw mo ng kaaway,
kung ayaw mo ng kaaway,
then don't stand for anything.
Huwag ka manindigan.
Lahat okay sa'yo.
Be,
be good to everyone.
Maging pakiyot ka na lang sa lahat para wala kang kaaway.
Kaya itong tanong ko sa mga taong nagsasabi wala kaming kaaway,
ang tanong ko, ano bang panindigan mo sa buhay mo?
What do you stand for in your life?
Merong mga politiko na umiikot,
sabi niya, kaibigan ng bayan,
walang kaaway.
Sabi ko, delikado itong politiko na ito.
Kaibigan ng bayan, walang kaaway.
Bakit? Walang panindigan din.
Lahat sa kanya, pwede.
Kung kanya yung tayo mo sa buhay,
lahat ng bagay, pwede,
wala kang kaaway dyan.
Pero wala kang panindigan.
And when you follow Jesus,
always remember this,
when you follow Christ,
you have to take a stand,
one way or the other.
One of these days,
mamimili ka talaga.
If you follow Jesus,
you will really have to stand for Him.
And when you stand for Christ,
itong sinabi ni Jesus,
you will be persecuted.
People will hate you because of me.
Ang sabi niya.
Make friends.
Expand the love of Christ in you.
Expand it through your friendships.
Amen?
Share the love of Jesus.
Expand, extend the love of Christ
to everyone,
as far as you can,
extend it,
and establish your friendship
in Christ always.
Enemies,
prepare always for your enemies.
Prepare for them.
Prepare to love them.
Prepare to bless them.
That you may win them to Christ.

This Holy Week,
yan ang focus natin.
It's about relationships.
Relationship with God,
our relationship with our family,
our friends,
our loved ones,
and our relationship
with our enemies as well.
Amen.
Shall we stand?
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